

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 04881 240945Z

62

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INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

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AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 4881

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PGOV, ET

SUBJECT: PMAC'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTIONARY PROGRAM:
EMBASSY'S INITIAL COMMENTS

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 4811, B. ADDIS ABABA 4821, C. ADDIS
ABABA K4822

SUMMARY: PMAC'S FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN MENGISTU DELIVERED
CAMPAIGN SPEECH" INTRODUCING EPMG'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC
REVOLUTIONARY PROGRAM. SPEECH AND PROGRAM SEEM DESIGNED
TO PROPITIATE FAR LEFT CRITICS OF DIRG, AND READ LIKE PLEA
BY MENGISTU FOR POLITICAL SUPPORT AND TIME TO OVERCOME
ADVERSE CONTEXT IN WHICH ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION IS COMPELLED
TO PROCEED. IT IS NOT CLEAR FROM CONTENTS WHETHER MENGISTU
OR PMAC PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR SUBSTANCE
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PAGE 02 ADDIS 04881 240945Z

FOR PROPOSALS--NOR DO WE KNOW WHAT ATTITUDE OF DIRG, MILITARY,

CIVIL SERVICE TOWARDS THESE MAY BE. IT IS ALSO NOTEWORTHY THAT FOREIGN POLICY FORMULATIONS REMAIN UNCHANGED: THAT DEVOLUTION OF AUTHORITY FROM CENTER TO PROVINCES AND NATIONALITIES REMAINS CHOSEN FRAMEWORK FOR ULTIMATE SOLUTION TO ETHIOPIA'S DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS ALTHOUGH STEPS TO BE TAKEN IN THIS FRAMEWORK STILL NOT SPELLED OUT; AND THAT THERE IS NO APPARENT RECOGNITION THAT ERITREA IS SPECIAL CASE FOR WHICH SPECIAL CONCESSIONS WILL BE REQUIRED. END SUMMARY.

1. THERE FOLLOW EMBASSY'S PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON SPEECH OF PMAC'S FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN MENGISTU HAILE MARIAM INTRODUCING SUBJECT PROGRAM (REFTELS):

A. SPEECH AND PROGRAM ARE COMPLEMENTARY AND MUST BE REED TOGETHER.

B. PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION APPEARS TO BE APPEASE FAR LEFT AND PLEAD FOR TIME IN WHICH REVOLUTIONARY CONSCIOUSNESS OF ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE CAN BE RAISED TO FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF REVOLUTIONARY PROGRAM. THIS IS NECESSARY BECAUSE CONTEXT IN WHICH ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION IS BEING CONDUCTED IS ADVERSE AND PROGRESSIVE FORCES HAVE ENORMOUS OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME.

C. IN MANY RESPECTS ADDRESS AND PROGRAM ADD UP TO A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN EFFORT (REplete WITH INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS) PURPORTING TO OFFER SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY WHO IS NOT MEMBER OF REACTIONARY MIDDLE CLASS TARGET. THUS, PUBLIC SECTOR IS TO BE ENLARGED BUT PRIVATE FARMERS WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT. THERE WILL BE CENTRAL PLANNING AND STRONG GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER NATIONALIZED MEANS OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION WHILE PRIVATE INCENTIVES ARE TO BE ENHANCED. ALL ETHIOPIANS, PARTICULARLY INCLUDING VETERANS, WILL HAVE INCREASED FINANCIAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND HEALTH BENEFITS. WOMEN WILL BE MOBILIZED FOR PRODUCTIVE WORK AND FREED FROM THE SHACKLES OF THE LIMITED ROLES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE TO THEM. THERE WILL BE NO DISCRIMINATION OR FAVORITISM ON LINGUISTIC, RELIGIOUS, OR SEXUAL GROUNDS. HOWEVER, FULL DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS SUCH AS FREE SPEECH WILL OF COURSE BE AVAILABLE ONLY TO "PROGRESSIVES,"

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PAGE 03 ADDIS 04881 240945Z

ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL, AND ETHIOPIANS ARE DIVIDED INTO MUTUALLY ANTAGONISTIC GROUPS OF WHITE-HAT WORKERS, PEASANTS, ETC. AND BLACK-HAT BOURGEOIS, ARESTOCRATS AND

BUREAUCRATIC CAPITALISTS, THE FORMER BEING EXPECTED AND ENCOURAGED TO SUBDUE THE LATTER.

D. CAMPAIGN SPEECH AND PROGRAM RAISE MORE QUESTIONS THAN THEY RESOLVE. ADDRESS IS A PLEA FOR POLITICAL SUP-

PORT, PARTICULARLY FROM LEFT BUT--PROBABLY SIGNIFICANTLY
--IT SAYS NOTHING OF SUBSTANCE ABOUT THE DIRG, THE MILITARY AND THE EPMG'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ELABORATION OF THE PROGRAM; IT IS SILENT ON THE FULL RELATIONSHIPS OF OF THESE ENTITIES TO THE "OFFICE"--WHICH, AT LEAST ON PAPER, IS GIVEN OPEN ENDED POWERS--AND THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES POSITED. MOREOVER, IT LEAVES US GUESSING WHETHER OR NOT ADDRESS AND PROGRAM ARE THE RESULT OF MENGISTU'S COLLABORATION WITH HIS CLIQUE OF DIRG COLLEAGUES, OR PERHAPS AGAINST THE DIRG WITH IDEOABGICAL ADVISERS, OR YET WHETHER THEY ARE THE PRODUCT OF NORMAL PMAC DECISION -MAKING. MAJOR QUESTION IS HOW MUCH OF PANDORA'S BOX IS BEING OPENED, I.E. HOW MUCH POLITICAL ACTIVITY WILL BE PERMITTED OR AT LEAST TOLERATED AND TO WHAT END. MOREOVER WHILE SPEECH AND PROGRAM OMIT ANY REFERENCE TO TIMING, TENOR CLEARLY SUGGESTS SOME TIME WILL ELAPSE BEFORE GOALS ARE ACHIEVED. MILITANTS, HOWEVER, WILL PROBABLY INTERPRET PROGRAM IN MUCH MORE IMMEDIATE TERMS AND MAY ATTEMPT TO ACT ACCORDINGLY. WE SHALL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE HOW EPMG WILL REACT.

E. STRIKINGLY, SUBSTANCE OF SPEECH AND PROGRAM SEEKS BE RESPONSIVE TO CRITICISM FROM THE URGAN LEFT (STUDENTS, DJMATCHOCH, ACADEMIC PROGRESSIVES, ETC.) I.E., A VERY SMALL GROUP WHICH HAS BEEN LONG ON IDEOLOGICAL PRESCRIPTIONS AND CRITICISM OF DIRG'S PERFORMANCE BUT SHORT ON PRAGMATIC SOLUTIONS FOR THIS VERY TRADITIONAL COUNTRY'S MANY MODERNIZATION PROBLEMS. HUGE GROUPS OF UP-COUNTRY APOLITICAL PEASANTS, SKEPTICS AND OPPONENTS OF DIRG ARE GIVEN THIN MIXTURE OF IDEOLOGY AND PROMISES TO FEED UPON, BUT THEY APPEAR TO BE DISTINCTLY SECONDARY AUDIENCE. MENGISTU TELLS URBAN MILITANT LEFT IDEOLOGUES THAT THEY ARE RIGHT. CLASS WAR IS INDEED THE

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PAGE 04 ADDIS 04881 240945Z

PRESCRIPTION FOR POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING, THE CONDITION PRECEDENT FOR AN EVENTUAL CURE OF COUNTRY'S TRIBAL, REGIONAL AND ETHNIC CONFLICTS WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY EMPOWER ALL NATIONALITIES TO DETERMINE THEIR LOT AND PERMIT LOCKX PROBLEMS TO BE DEALT WITH LOCALLY. MEANWHILE, THE COMMON STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND REACTION IS DEFINED, REALITIES NOTWITHSTANDING, AS THE GLUE THAT HOLDS ETHIOPIA TOGETHER.

F. SPEECH AND PROGRAM HAS DIRG CLINGING AS HERETOFORE TO PROPOSITION THAT ETHIOPIA'S PROBLEMS WILL BE RESOLVED BY THE DEVOLUTION OF AUTHORITY FROM THE CENTER. BUT ARTICULATION OF MANNER IN WHICH THIS IS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED IN DIFFICULT ETHIOPIAN CONTEXT REMAINS LIMITED TO BROADCAST GENERALITIES (SEPARATE MORE DETAILED PRESENTATION ON ERITREA WAS PROMISED). MORE-

OVER, THERE IS STILL NO DISPOSITION TO RECOGNIZE THAT ERITREAN CASE BELONGS IN SPECIAL CATEGORY AND CANNOT EFFECTIVELY BE EQUATED WITH THAT OF OTHER PROVINCES.

G. ON FOREIGN POLICY, FORMULATION REMAINS UNCHANGED FROM THAT WHICH DIRG ORIGINALLY SET FORTH MANY MONTHS AGO.

H. IMPRESSION THAT SPEECH AND PROGRAM ADDRESSED PRIMARILY TO FAR LEFT MILITANTS ALSO ENHANCE BY UNRESERVED SESPOUSAL OF MARXIST MODEL (WITH BOWS TO BOTH SOVS AND PRC) AS ROAD MAP TO SOLUTION OF THIS COUNTRY'S POLITICAL PROBLEMS: WORKERS PARTY MUST BE CREATED, MUST BE SUPREME, MUST GOVERN OPERATIONS OF GOVERNMENT. CLASS STRUGGLE IS CONDITION PRECEDENT FOR PROGRESS INTER ALIA TOWARDS PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC. MARXIST NOMENCLATURE REIGNS SUPREME: "FULL" DEMONCRATIC RIGHTS OF "FREE SPEECH," ASSEMBLY ETC. ARE A GOAL; BUT ONE TO BE ASSESSIBLE ONLY TO APPROVED GROUPS AND CLASSES.

2. WE ARE SURVEYING OUR CONTACTS FOR THEIR REACTION TO SPEECH AND PROGRAM AND WILL SUBMIT REPORTS THEREON IN DUE COURSE.

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